An officer of the U. S. ship Albany, which vessel forms one of the blockading Squadron off Vera Cruz, has furnished the N. Y. Tribune with the following notes in reference to the Castle:

The Castle of Vera Cruz is no more what it was when France carried it, than you are now what you were a nursling in your mother's arms. Then there were no guns above the calibre of 24 pounds—and but few of them—most miserably served.— The magazines unarched were not bombproof; the powder was of such inferior character that not a shot penetrated the side of a French ship, but at the close of the engagement were struck about the sides of the shipping like so many balls of mud; and in addition to all this, the commanding officer having been instructed not to fire the first gun, permitted the French Squadron to come up and take its position as quietly as though mooring to pass the Winter sea-

Now let us see what a changed time and a severe lesson have effected in this same castle. There are at present mounted within its periphery nearly 300 cannons, and these all 32s, 42s and 10 inch Paixhan, there being a very large number of the latter; and wherever it has been possible to train a gun upon the channel of approach, they are planted "en barbette"-so that a fleet moving up to the attack must be exposed to the concentrated fire of 70 cannons, over a distance of two miles, before it can get into a position to return a single shot.

The Castle of "San Juan" fronts the city at a distance of about three eighths of a mile; and is supported by a water battery, at the north west angle of the town of filty 32 and 42 pound guns, all of which with those of the Castle commanding the channel, would enfilade the spuadron passing up, bows on, from the moment it arrived within range of the shot until its anchors were down, with springs upon the cables, within the reach of musket shot. Judge, then, what a force would be required for any promise of success and at what an immense sacrifice it would be accomplished, if at all. The garrison at this moment is composed of 2,000 men. In the event of an attack they would with the most perfect safety retire within the casemates (which are as impervious to shot as the sides of Mount Orizaba) until the ammunition of the assail ing force was expended, when they would return to their guns and sweep the waters before them with the most terrific, destructive effect. The officer commanding the Castle lately sent official word "that if the Commodore would bring his fleet up, he might fire until there was not a shot left in the locker, and he would promise him not to return a gun until he was done firing."

It is very easy to batter down the Castle of Vera Cruz by a few mathematical lines upon a piece of white paper, and it is still easier to harrangue a curious giddy crowd at the corner of a street; to such a tune old women may prattle over their quiet firesides about our glorious fleets razing San Juan de Ulloa to the ground by a single broad side, and young bucks and heroes, pressing through a fierce moustache and imperial, may heap invectives upon what is called the "masterly inactivity' of Com. Conner-but send these gentry down here, and if they have not less brains than beard, they will soon see the folly of such fanfaronade, and perhaps in the ordinary hard seror I die!" for there is not a single officer on this station who would not very much prefer service with the Army, with some re-mote probability of a fight, the annoyance and privation of a vigorous blackade of Vera Cruz during the Winter month, on an allowance of water, with salt provisions in-creasing the thirst for it, a change of time as far between as angel's visits, with gale after gale sweeping dark o'er the main .-There is no enterprise, with a tolerable promise of carrying it, that would not be preferable to it.

The City of Vera Cruz, containing some

7,000 inhabitants, and wailed in with a rampare constructed of coral and mud, is seated directly upon the strand, a low sandy beach, swelling slowly into ranges of hillocks of sand, which flank the city inland, and seem to break up the surface entirely between the mountains, (which rear their lofty heads heaven-wards in the distance of some 30 or 40 miles,) and the sea. The intermediate space is poisoned with swarms of stagnant pools and marshes, which engender the fatal miasma, so destuctive to life during the rainy seasons.

In a subsequent letter the same writer thus alludes to the new plan of campaign which is now being carried into execution under General Scott:

An army of about 8,000 men is to be immediately collected and put in motion from various points for Vera Cruz-3,000 regulars are to embark from Tampico as seen as they can be drawn in from the upper country, and 5,000 volunteers it is said are now on their way from the U. States. A debarkation will take place at Lizardo or Sacrificio. The cny of Vera Cruz will be surgied in the rear. At the same time the Squadrom is se engage the Castle of San Taun will cently near to obviste the pushbulgest may not being thrown into the lown from the Castle, and the former being once in the possession of cert troops, it will be the control of the possession of cert troops, it will be the facility of the country near to the control of the possession of the principal troops, it will be the control of the country near the country near the country of the country aballation the regulars are to embark from Tampico as

would preclude the possibility of its being | I f either checked or annoyed by the fire of the Castle. The tremendous strength and impenetrable defences of San Juan place it wholly beyond the pale of any successful attack by sea, and the impression is that the capture of it will occasion the inevitable necessity of destroying it totally, as the unhealthiness of Vera Cruz would make it untenable for our troops—and to advance into the interior from Vera Cruz, which is believed to be the fixed policy of our Go-vernment, it must be destroyed, or garrisoned, for the safety of the Army, in the event of its sustaining any decisive reverses.-Besides, in the citadel of Vera Cruz lies the whole strength and pride of the Mexican Republic, as well as the safety of the city of Mexico. Raze it, and I doubt not that Mexico will be humbled at once into a suit for peace. It is quite impossible to say what will be done as everything depends upon the "denouement at Saltillo.

# From Washington.

Declination of Major General Benton. The National Intelligencer of Wednes-

lay has the following announcement:—
We understand that the Hon. Thomas H. Benton, declines the appointment of Major General in the Army, tendered to him by the President and Senate.

For this step a variety of causes are assigned; but generally concurring that difficulty has arisen in relation to the powers with which Mr. Benton should he invested. The Baltimore Patriot gives a somewhat highly colored sketch of the manner of the would-be generalissimo.

These are the rumors and reports from Washington. We hear from gentlemen who were there yesterday, that there is much lissatisfaction felt in the War Department at the manner in which Major Gen. Benton bore himself. Mr. Marcy was really at a oss how to conduct himself towards the august personage," and even Mr. Polk could ill conceal his uneasiness whenever House. Those who have seen him "marchng," along Pennsylvania avenue, say it is a 'sight" which would justify all who are curious in such to go to Washington to see. The "swagger," the strut of consequence, the patronizing air, and the grand dignity, which are all blended in him, show that he feels he has united in his person all the powers" and all the "airs" which belong or attach to a high plenipotentiary. The Mexican generals have a high reputation in certain that Major General Benton is a match for them, in all that constitutes pomposity. An interview between him and Ampudia would be a rare sight.

But there are whispers that if the new General does not get off soon, he may never go. He carries matters now so high that another feather in his hat, or an extra button on his coat, may cause a general revolt. A letter says: "You must not be surprised if there is a 'flare up' between gen. Benton and Mr. Polk. The former acts if he were the President, and the latter seems to be afraid of crossing him in any thing. 'I must have powers, sir. My plan requires it, sir; and it must be carried out just as it is set down.' This is what is reported the new Major General saps to the President, and all other functionaries, and unless they all yield to him, there is no getting along vice attending the blockade only, be the first to cry out, "Give me some drink, Titinius, Benton does not get off before the close of Benton does not get off before the close of the week, he will not go at all!"

A correspondent of the Baltimore Sun, who is generally au fait as to the State Department, says:

The true General, in this matter, I aporehend, will be the Secretary of State, who has already so far out-generaled the Mexicaus, that nothing is left for them to do but to make peace and sell, on reasonable terms, what they can no longer hope to re-conquer by force of arms. But Major General Benton insists, as I understand, on being commissioner-or rather minister plenipotentiary and the envoy extraordinary to Mexico, in order to make a treaty of peace and amity with Mexico; and he may succeed in obtaining such an appointment. But it would rather more than charity in Mr. Buchanan, were he to allow Mr. Benton to finish "solitary and alone," what Mr. Buchanan has so happily began—the aim he has had constantly in view, and to obtain which he has taxed all his ingenuity, forecast and power. Mr. Buchanan has been the mediator all along in this matter long before Mr. Benton came to the support of the administration—and it is but pro-per that the honor of making peace and an advantageous treaty shall be given to whom it is due - Tuum cuique.

And again :

Mr. Benton, I believe, has not yet fully made up his mind to accept the Major Generalship tendered him by the President, in a true spirit of peace, making in more than one respect. The fact is, he couples so many conditions to his acceptance that it is difficult to comply with them in justice to other claims. Were the war but beginning now, Col. Benton would undoubtedly be one of the best appointments that could be made; but in its present stage, when the President and his Cabinet have already done so much to bring it to a happy close-when men are required but to consummat when men are required but to consummate, and not to construct and plan, the President cannot surrender his own historical claims to the respect of his fellow citizens and the works to others, be they ever so much his friends, and supporters. Mr. Polk has

BANNER



ABBEVILLE C. H., S. C. Wednesday, March 17, 1847.

## Cotton Market.

Charleston March the 12th from 10 to 11 -2. Hamburg, March 13th, from 9 to 11

A BOY some 14 or 15 years of age of steady industrious habits can get a situation in this office by applying immediately.

Our Court commenced its session on Monday last, Judge WITHERS presiding. The return to this Court we learn, is quite small which speaks well for the prosperity of our people and district.

## Mr. Benton.

We learn by the Charleston Patriot, that the editor has received a copy of a letter addressed to the Hon. I. E. Holmes, by Senator Benton, informing him of his refusal to accept the appointment of Major General. We approve highly of this Senators course for doubtless there are hundreds in this country better qualified, and more worthy of that post than himself.

#### Palmetto Regiment.

In this week's paper will be found further particulars from our Regiment, which is now at Lobos Island. It appears that the plan the newly made General entered the White of operations of this division is not yet defini ely known among the volunteers, but it is still the opinion that Vera Cruz will be attacked as soon as preparations can be made for it. The rumor of this important post having been abandoned by the Mexicans, s not confirmed by the latest dates, and is no doubt false. Should such however be the case, Mexican valor must be at a low ebb indeed, for if our troops were in possession such things, but from what is said, it is very of that city and castle, it certainly would do more to intimidate Mexico, and bring her to terms of peace, than any measure that has yet been accomplished.

# Mexican News.

The rumor of a battle having been ought recently near Saltillo, between the forces of Gen. TAYLOR and SANTA ANNA still wants confirmation. The correspondents of La Patria from Tampico. says :-

"The report of the battle between Santa Anna and Taylor near Saltillo, is altogether improbable, as Santa Anna at the last accounts, which are very recent, was at San Louis, engaged in arranging his forces. When the American forces leave for Vera Cruz, it is said that General Urrea will march from Tula with a column of 8000 or 9000 men against Tampico. Gen. Urrea's force is composed one third part of Cavalry, with two battalions of Artillery. It is his intention to attack Tampico simultaneous with the American attack on Vera Cruz. This officer is also prepared with a force of 4000 men to march on to Matamoras. Gen. Arista is still in the city of Mexico, awaiting his trial on charges relating to his conduct at the battle of the 8th and 9th of May."

## (Correspondence of the Banner.) From our Volunteers. ISLAND OF LOBOS, CAMP WINFIELD, February 10th, 1847.

Friend Allen :- The second detachment composed of the Sumpter. Abbeville and Lancaster volunteers, sailed on the 30th ult., under the command of Lieut. Colonel DICKINSON, with sealed orders. When the pilot was discharged the seals were broken open, the orders published, and we were directed to land at the Island of Lobos, which lies in lat. 21 26 long. 97.

I mustered on board, eighty-three men rank and file, and all in good health. Before leaving Mobile, I applied to our Col. for funds to bring on my sick, which were left at Hamburg, Atlanta, and Lagrange: The amount forwarded back was \$140, which was considered amply sufficient to bring them on to Mobile, where they would remain until the Edgefield and Newberry companies would arrive, and then all would come on and join their respective compa-

lubbers, which we all are, more interesting than a sea voyage, as long as we have a

were on dry land. So thoroughly satisfied with sea voyages, are some of my men, that they have resolved when they return home, to head the Mississippi. We left Mobile men from going to the hospital, which is ve-Bay with a fair wind and steerd, S. W. by S. half S., and it was truly interesting to see how eager the men crowded to the stern of our ship, to catch the last glimse of our native shore, and perhaps the last forever for some of us: but under the care of a kind is from the Mississippi. We have here, Providence, we hope to serve our country faithfully and return in due season to our

On Tuesday night at 11 o'clock we were aroused from our births by the cry of fire. All on deck rushed to where the smoke was seen issuing from the side of the galley. The first impression was that the ship was on fire between decks, which if it had been the fact, would have been inevitable destruction; but it was soon discovered that the side of the galley was on fire, caused by the overheating of a temporary brick-stove, which had been erected for the accommodation of the volunteers. A few buckets of water soon allayed our fears; but, imagine for a moment yourself, three hundred miles from land, circumscribed by the narrow limits of a vessel, and aroused from your bed in the dead of night, by the cry of fire; you then can imagine what our feelings were. The cry of fire on land carries terror with the sound, but on sea beyond the reach of hope, it is appalling. I have not the least doubt that, that alarm was the salvation of our ship; with the exception of a severe gale on last Tuesday, we had a delightful passage the balance of our trip.

Here we are once more upon Terra Firma, the Island of Lobos, one of the loveliest spots I have ever seen. The Island would be more properly called, Coral Island as its entire formation as far as we have dug, is of Coral shell. It is covered by an evergreen growth of Orange, Lemon, Fig, Banyan, Fir, and it appears a hundred different kinds of vines hanging with fruit. In clearing up our camp ground, my company cut down a grove of the finest Lemon trees I have ever seen; and on the same tree you will see the blossom half grown, and ripe Lemon. So well pleased are some of my company with this lovely spot, that they have determined to settle here after the war is over, and all they want to make it a perfact elyseum is Carolina wives; but we have a duty before us of more importance, to our country, than to think of Colonizing Santa Anna's Islands. A treaty of peace is to be conquered, sealed with our blood.

When we arrived here, we found one Battalion of the 1st Pennsylvania Regiment, six companies of the Louisiana Regiment, and the first detachment of the South Carolina volunteers under the command of Major GLADDEN. Up to this time there has arrived one battalion of the Mississippi Regiment, one of the 2d Pennsylvania Regiment, a portion of Gen. WORTH's command and above all the 3d detachment of the South Carolina volunteers under the command of Col. BUTLER. Our Regiment is the only complete Regiment on the Island, and it makes our hearts proud to see the Banner of our beloved State proudly waving over an enemy's soil, and we hope in a short time to see it fanned by the breezes that wast over the city of Vera Cruz. A force of twelve thousand men is ordered to rendezvous here by the 20th, and in four weeks you may expect to hear of a hard fought battle; in short, our destination is Vera Cruz; and if we succeed in capturing that city, of which I have not the least doubt under such officers as Generals Scott and WORTH. Our course is then for the "Halls of the Montezumas." We have just learned that a bearer of despatches and his guard from Gen. Scott to TAYLOR, informing him of his intended movement upon the city of Vera Cruz, was cut off to a man by the Mexicans. The heart of the bearer was cut out and hung upon a tree, and now we have no doubt our movements will be anticipated by SANTA ANNA, with a large force, to defeat our grand entry in the city of Vera Cruz. Our Regiment is in fine spirits, and with ten more days drilling we will be ready for the field, and if an opportunity offers, I have no doubt we will give a good account of ourselves.

It affords me much pleasure to inform you that the Abbeville volunteers are in excellent spirits, and enjoying good health There is no mode of travelling to land with the exception of six cases of mumps, and one of fever, Lieut. Roskers, who is convalescent at this time and will be able to "fair wind and flowing see;" but let a stiff resume his command in the company in the breaze spring up—the seves rell high, and course of a few days. I seel it my duty to near is, the ship commence plunging and rolling, say here, that we are much indebted to our in the time we begin to seel and private Surgeon. Dr. Acronw, for the good ways he health we have enjoyed, whilst other compared in the limit of the compared in the same with the same are much indebted to our private Surgeon. Dr. Acronw, for the good ways he health we have enjoyed, whilst other compared in the same with the s

nies have been prostrated, and one third of their men thrown into the hospital. By having him with us I manage to keep my ry desirable, as every mess can attend to

We have sunk a good many wells on the Island in search of fresh water, but all as yet prove brackish. Our drinking water what would be called in Carolina, delightful May weather, the Thermometer standing in the shade at 78 degrees, and above all, the greatest luxury we have yet enjoyed, sea bathing at night and morning. It would be amusing to our friends to see the boys with their suspenders tied around their waist, standing over their camp kettles washing their clothes. With some it went rather hard at first; and as money is of no service in the washing line, they now can flatten the side of a fir tree, hue a batling stick out of orange, and hang on the lemon bush a pretty fair shirt, in quick time.

Truly yours, J. FOSTER MARSHALL.

We are indebted to a friend for the following letter, and although somewhat lengthy will be read with interest.

CAMP WINGFELD, Isle of Lobos, Feb. 13, 1847.

On the 27th of January, we took passage on the steamer Creole. On the evening of the same day, we boarded the ship Oregon off from Mobile point. This was the transport employed by the Government to carry us we knew not then where. On the 28th we had a severe gale, which compelled us to remain at anchor during the entire day. The day following we still remained at anchor, in consequence of the roughness of the sea. On the 30th we set sail, and under a fine wind, were soon out of the sight of land. This was my first day at sea, and I never enjoyed any thing more in my life. The weather was pleasant and the wind favorable, and our good ship went bravely on. The day went off finely; we were all full of life and enjoyment. About 10 o'clock at night, however, the appearance of things underwent quite a change, for a little while at least, we were aroused from our slumbers by the cry of fire. The fore cabin of our vessel was discovered in flames! We had on board a large supply of ordnance, which was stored away in the magazine between decks, with the fireburning just above. This rendered our situation very precarious. We knew if the fire raged for many minutes our ship would be blown up. You know a soldier should have no fear. I will not say that the officers and men on deck were frightened-oh! no; they were brave men. But I did see many a pale face, and many a trembling lip; and if I mistake not, some breathed a prayer that night who had seldom prayed before. For myself, I confess I have no desire ever again to be on board a burning ship out of the sight of land. In a short time, however, we succeeded in extinguishing the flame, which, if it had remained undiscovered only for a few minutes longer, would have defied all our exertions.

The next day was clear and fair, and we went on finely, taking the precaution always to look well to our fires. In the evening of this day, we have enjoyed one of the most magnificent sights I have ever witnessed. A sunset on sea followed immediately by the rising of the full moon. From one side of the vessel we watched the sun as he gradually sunk down into a bed apparently of liquid flame. From the other side of the ship we saw the moon slowly emerge from the waves and cast her silver light around. The flery rays of the sun, contrasted with the soft mellow light of the moon, added to the beauty of the scene. It was grand beyond all description. The following day was dark and gloomy es the preceeding one had been bright and clear. At night, we had a severe norther, and learned by experience something of the term of a storm at sea. This I feel wholly incompetent to describe, and will not attempt it. The roaring of the wind the repeated and vivid flashes of lightning, followed by peal after peal of thunder-the lashing of the waves, the tossing of the ship the midnight darkness all taken together, form a scene of terrific grandeur which you can better imagine than I describe. After the storm came, not a calm, but see sickness. For three days I was so deathly sick that I cared for poshing. I was indif-ferent as to whether I lived or sied—as to whether our vessel was wrecked or ! You have no idea how simile est sic

In domain with raise persons that a sure of the second sec